Section 2

Homelessness

General Findings on Homelessness

- **With regard to Housing the Homeless**
    - There is a need for more emergency shelter, transitional residential housing, permanent supportive housing, low barrier housing, public voucher housing, affordable workforce housing, inclusionary housing, land trust housing and market rate housing
    - Capacity through the Big Bend Continuum of Care (BBCoC) is developing
    - Resources are needed for homeless housing; <u>explore identifying gaps between homeless services and homeless people</u>
- **COVID-19 Has Had Significant Impacts on the Corridor**
    - Capacity Reductions by about 54% at the 4 Emergency Shelter Locations are on-going
    - Housing homeless at hotels on North Monroe has had impacts
- **Approximately 23% of homeless are from other communities**
    - Within Florida there is a robust network of 27 Continuums of Care that can coordinate homeless resources and location
    - No cross-state or national coordination among Continuums of Care exists
    - Homeless from other communities may be moving through the community to other destinations
- **Encampments exist along the corridor and are difficult to identify and control**
- **Businesses have been impacted by homeless and have not used resources other than TPD and the LCSO**

- Homeless individuals have affected operations by approaching or harassing patrons
- Resources available to address issues immediately are not readily available to business owners
- Business owners do not know about BBCoC or Salvation Army report or referral services
- Residents in neighborhoods near the interchange have experienced property intrusion by homeless individuals and experienced aggressive interactions and panhandling when visiting nearby businesses
- Existing resources are available to the corridor, but not heavily employed and have some limitations, including:
  - Big Bend Continuum of Care
    - Outreach Team – but not an immediate response (as much as a week)
    - Referral and support services through organization
      - Rapid rehousing
      - Services referrals
  - Salvation Army
    - Location on corridor
    - Various support offerings
      - Food pantry, meal services, furniture vouchers, infant items, family shop, community Thanksgiving, laundry cards/items, Christmas assistance
      - Pathway of Hope
    - Outreach Team in coordination with BBCoC
  - Law Enforcement but have limitations including ability to relocate or connect with services immediately or within hours (and must have a willing individual to seek services)

- o Other related resources
    - ▪ Apalachee Center Crisis Response Team (in City for mental health issues)
    - ▪ Apalachee Center Homeless Team (question on staffing level)
    - ▪ Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center (STAC) if human trafficking suspected

Objective 1: Reduce Homelessness in the Corridor

Resource or Need	Opportunity Recommendation	Cost/Additional Needs	Timeframe
Human Services "Street Outreach" Team	• Within the next year support increased resources to that team during the next budget cycle • Within 3 years, increase employment of the team by 50% to assist in getting homeless into housing through BBCoC, Salvation Army, and mental health referral resources	County Funding Approved	Short-Term (1-3) years
One-Stop Shop for housing and support services on the corridor coordinated through BBCoC and Salvation Army	• Within a year, assess ability and determine a strategy (if possible) for BBCoC and Salvation Army to provide a one-stop shop for housing and support services and referrals	Feedback from provider organizations	?
A safe daytime destination for homeless individuals on the corridor	• Within 6 months, explore feasibility/assess/identify a community champion or partner and resources needed for a daytime center	Donation, rent or purchase of facility in a suitable location – approximately $300K	Needed now but may be long-term project

**Increase Housing for Emergency Sheltering	• There are resource allocations but not enough to fully address immediate housing needs. Prioritize and support those immediate housing resources that could assist homeless in the corridor	****No Specific Recommendation**	****Needed now but may be long-term project**
Maximize use of Continuum of Care (CoC) Networks to provide home-locating outside of community	• Prioritize use of in-state CoC network for resource connection to individual homeless from other Florida communities • Identify potential interstate CoC connections to Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia to determine if those community CoC networks can connect individual homeless to home or receiving communities	**BBCoC to implement. Resource or staff cost?**	

Develop a strategy for minimizing encampments both private and public	• Coordinate with Homeless Service Providers for services to homeless individuals:
	  o Employ the Street Outreach team
	  o Develop incentives for individuals to leave encampments
	  o Explore feasibility of supervised camp facility for those not interested in traditional homeless or emergency shelters
		No specific recommendation	

Objective 2: Assist Businesses with Homeless Issues			
Resource	**Opportunity Recommendation**	**Cost/Additional Needs**	**Timeframe**
BBCoC and Salvation Army Resource Guides and Cards – Establish	• **Within 5 months** o **Determine availability of or develop one (1) comprehensive resource guide that includes**	**Request assistance in task from BBCoC, Salvation**	**Short-Term (1-3) years**

connections with businesses to support them and provide assistance to homeless individuals	all service provider agencies (BBCoC, Salvation Army, STAC, & Apalachee Center) ○ Provide the resource guide(s) to all businesses along the corridor • Provide a 1-page resource posting that could be used by businesses at their establishments • Establish an Outreach Team contact for the corridor and provide a phone number as contact information to business owners and staff • Make available to businesses: ○ Training about Homeless and Human Trafficking resources ○ Resources guides/cards information in the Human Trafficking training approved by the County	Army and Apalachee Center Coordinate with STAC on Human Trafficking training materials to include the resource guides	
Assistance with making homeless individuals employable	• Support the licensure and ID program from BBCoC through the Street Outreach team	BBCoC to advise	
Coordinated Joint Effort Between Law Enforcement, Housing providers, & County/City Service Departments	• Hold at least 1 coordinative meeting in the next 3 months between Law Enforcement, housing providers, and County/City service providers including BBCoC and Salvation Army to develop a develop a different quick-response non-punitive strategy to address or remove homeless individuals that are disrupting the operations of businesses	Homeless Service Providers Coordinate with LCSO & TPD	

Objective 3: Assist Residents in Frequenting Businesses & Feeling Safe in Neighborhoods

Resource	Opportunity Recommendation	Cost/Additional Needs	Timeframe
BBCoC and Salvation Army connections with residents & neighborhood associations	• Within 5 months – See recommendation for consolidated provider agency resource guide(s) above. Provide resource guide(s) to all neighborhood associations along the corridor • Establish an Outreach Team contact for the corridor and provide a phone number as contact information to residents and neighborhood associations	Request assistance in task from BBCoC, Salvation Army and Apalachee Center Coordinate with STAC on Human Trafficking training materials to include the resource guides	Short-Term (1-3) years
Neighborhood Watch/Crime Deterrent programs through law enforcement	• Provide Neighborhood Watch program information to all neighborhoods along the corridor	Request assistance from LSCO and TPD to inform and train residents/neighborhoods on the corridor	
Coordinated Joint Effort Between Law Enforcement, Housing providers, & County/City Service Departments	• Hold at least 1 coordinative meeting in the next 3 months between Law Enforcement, housing providers, and County/City service providers including BBCoC and Salvation Army to develop a different quick-response non-punitive strategy to address or remove homeless individuals that are trespassing or harassing residents in residential neighborhoods	Homeless Service Providers Coordinate with LCSO & TPD	